



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Asheville Field Office
160 Zillicoa Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

August 15, 1997

Mr. Robert Johnson
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Asheville Regulatory Field Office
151 Patton Avenue, Room 143
Asheville, North Carolina 28801-5006



Dear Bob:

Subject: Proposed paving of Needmore Road, SR 1364 and SR 1114, Macon and Swain Counties, North Carolina.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is aware of plans to pave Needmore Road in Macon and Swain Counties, North Carolina, along the Little Tennessee River. In a meeting on July 15, 1997, we discussed our concerns about this and other projects in the Little Tennessee River watershed area with you. We have not received a copy of any permit application for the subject project, which we specifically requested from you at that July 15th meeting. The following comments are provided in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543) (Act).

Personnel from our office attended a meeting on August 11, 1997, with North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) District Engineer Joel Setzer and NCDOT County Engineer Trent Anderson, as well as others. The Service has relied upon descriptions of the project provided at this meeting, as well as field stakes observed along the route for our analysis. The proposed project involves the widening of shoulders, realignment of the centerline, and paving of two 10-foot lanes. According to Mr. Anderson, a permit request for use of Nationwide Permit No. 14 to replace culverts in conjunction with widening and paving of the Needmore Road, SR 1364, was submitted in May 1997. Though the permit application has been submitted, the Service has not received a copy from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). According to Mr. Setzer and Mr. Anderson, similar plans are being developed for the Swain County portion of this road (SR 1114, approximately 2.3 miles). Staff of the Planning and Environmental Branch of the NCDOT are currently preparing environmental documentation for this project.